2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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Another instance was given by The Boy regarding his father. "Lame Bull was on a buffalo-hunting party when his brother-in-law was killed during an encounter with the enemy. They brought the body as it was back to camp, where it lay for quite a while. Lame Bull finally went to his tipi and got leggings and a shirt of his own, although he was Flat Pipe Keeper at the time and it was taboo for one holding this office to give his clothes to the dead. Nevertheless Lame Bull removed the bloody clothes from the body of his brother-in-law, washed the body and dressed it in his own clothes. He paid for this kindness, however, because for nine years thereafter he had such pains in his legs he was not able to walk,—this being the punishment he suffered for breaking the rules by which the Keeper of a sacred pipe should live."

Before finally disposing of the body "something very expensive," like a big silk handkerchief, was placed over the face. The whole body, including the head, was then wrapped securely in a blanket or robe and tied "like a mummy." The body was placed on a stretcher and put in a forked tree, if practicable, the head to the setting sun. Otherwise the corpse might be laid on a knoll and a structure like a sweatlodge built over it to protect it from the wild beasts; or it might be laid in the cleft of a cliff and covered with rocks.[4] For a particularly prominent man, however, his own lodge might serve as his last resting place. In that case holes would be dug in which the lodge-poles were placed, in order that the structure would be more permanent. The body was laid in the lodge amidst rich furnishings. The ears of the lodge were closed, the cover pegged down, and the whole secured as well as possible. This was done, for instance, for The Boy's maternal grandfather and for one of his maternal uncles. Al Chandler remembers that when he himself was a small boy upon the death of his uncle, Rises Again, the body was placed on a bedstead in a big lodge erected about a half-mile from his house.

Even in times of great stress, such as in a smallpox epidemic when so many died that "the trees along the Milk River were just loaded with bodies," as much care as possible was taken to place the bodies properly in their last resting place. When there was no more space on the trees, a large number of bodies were put in a

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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executes the direction or will of the Supreme Being. He is the medium or means by which the Supreme Being works. When a big storm is about to break, a pipe is filled and the Supreme Being is prayed to in the direction from which the storm is coming and is asked to spare the people during this storm, to direct Bha'a not to kill them, to say a word or two to Bha'a himself not to shoot around too close to camp. The people are afraid of Bha'a since he does his job in such a violent way. Even though Bha'a is held in high esteem and is considered an extraordinary being, he is a creature [under control] of the Supreme Being."

Bha'a was closely associated with the Feathered Pipe, not at all with the Flat Pipe.

Bha'a too entered into the Sacrifice Lodge ("Sun dance") as the being who could cause rain and so bring a good season for the food quest and bring coolness and shade in hot weather. While supernatural power was not explicitly sought from Bha'a he might occasionally on his own initiative have pity on a man and give him power to be a great warrior and even to make storms. But on a war expedition the participants would pray to the Supreme Being to be saved from wounds and death; not the slightest thought of Bha'a would enter their minds unless they were overtaken by a bad storm.

It may be added here that, while violent thunderstorms are common in Gros Ventre territory, deaths from lightning are not frequent. The Boy could recall only three such deaths, occurring in Gros Ventre territory during his experience, two on one occasion when he was a young boy and one on a later occasion around 1930.

The word Bha'a is used not only for the Thunderbird but enters into the term also for the water and earth monsters, bha'anbi:'iθān.[14]

The water monster,—or monsters as there appear to be a number of them, for they are reported from various large rivers, and springs where they bathe,—is usually envisioned as a huge,

[14] The Boy explained in 1948: "The word bi:'iθān includes water bugs, crawling bugs, bugs of all kinds; but a snake is never called bi:'iθā, nor will a snake ever be called bha'a. Water monster, no manner how many horns he has, or however much he resemble a snake, is always called bha'anbi:'iθā." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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793 174 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me: 'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.' Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case: "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fixing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you. I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts follow.

"One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, although he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact